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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our guard and guide, we thank You for this new day with its opportunities for noble service. As our lawmakers open their hearts to You, may they sense that Your presence is as pervasive in statecraft as in religion. Illuminate their finite minds with Your eternal light, giving them wisdom beyond their own. In their daily lives, may they validate the faith of the faithful who have gone before them, as You sustain them by the radiant vision of the ultimate triumph of Your Kingdom. Lord, remind them that some problems You will not solve until they are ready to be used by You in working out the solution.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of the budget resolution. Under an agreement reached last evening, 20 hours of statutory time remains, with the time equally divided between the minority and the majority. Rollcall votes are expected to occur throughout the day. Senators will be notified as soon as votes are scheduled.

As a reminder, when all statutory time expires on the budget resolution, additional amendments can be offered and immediately voted upon. Therefore, Thursday's session could extend into the night.

The two managers of the bill, Senator CONRAD and Senator GREGG, have gone through this process many times. It is my understanding that they have suggested to me and Senator McCONNELL that we start voting sometime this afternoon. There could be as many as 10 votes at that time. We will continue working with the managers. I will notify and communicate with the Republican leader throughout the day.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE BUDGET

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, throughout this debate, Republicans have shown that this budget spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. At a time when many are struggling just to get by, Democrats in Congress want to enact the largest tax increase in history, including a national energy tax that could cost every American household up to \$3,100 a year. They want to double the national debt in 5 years and triple it in 10. And they want to increase nondefense spending so much that the Government would have to hire up to 250,000 bureaucrats just to get the money out the door. Let me say that again. The Government would have to hire up to a quarter of a million bureaucrats just to get the money out the door. This is not the type of job creation Americans have been hoping for, and this was not the budget Americans wanted. Rather, they are demanding that Republicans and Democrats work together to craft a budget that lets them keep their hard-earned wages, spend their tax dollars wisely, and does not saddle their children and grandchildren with mountains of debt.

Republicans have tried to work with Democrats to pass such a budget by offering amendments that reflect the views of most Americans and soon will sponsor a series of amendments to prevent tax increases on individuals, families, and businesses. The junior Senator from Texas, for example, has an amendment that would make it significantly harder to raise taxes on small businesses. The President has noted repeatedly that small businesses are at the heart of the American economy, are responsible for half of all private sector jobs, and have created roughly 70 percent of all new jobs in the past decade. Republicans will propose an amendment by the junior Senator from Nevada which would make it significantly harder to raise taxes on couples making less than \$250,000 a year.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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